

Movie Review:

'Robocop' reboot crashes

Austin Gonzalez

OPINION EDITOR

How many blood squibs does it take to make an awesome action movie? At least a dump truck's worth apparently. The Robocop reboot debuted recently and this critic was ultimately unsatisfied, but not more so than he was expecting. The Robocop reboot is receiving a lot of negative reviews that may not necessarily be warranted. It was better than a shameless money grab, not any better than the visceral experience of the original. It's essentially Robocop with more killing, less gore, and a sprinkled message about the military industrial complex.

This reboot seemed to have less that tied it to the original, hoping to stave off comparison and reach praise like the Judge Dredd reboot which re-mastered its story. Stylistically, the two movies are worlds apart and I don't think the Robocop story is one that lends itself to this new adaptation. It was a 1980's action movie, gratuitous to an extreme, literally a bloody good time. There's a scene where a rapist gets shot in his goodness for goodness' sake. Robocop just isn't a movie that can be

rebooted into a slapped on political message carrying, PG-13 rated, CGI-fest.

Thematically, I wasn't entertained either. There are all these emotional hits that I just did not care for. The main plot vein is the cliché where future science does something future scientist didn't foresee; the bad guy and future scientist clash over choosing to destroy and be bad or release the technology to be free. I wished the main sequence made sense in the larger view of the movie. The opening and ending sequences are of Samuel Jackson yelling on a talk show about how great it is America can provide safety in the middle east with advanced weaponry (drones no less). I get it. America shouldn't be pointing guns at people. What does this have to do with Robocop?

The original thrived on being gratuitous and satirical. If you want to watch a crazy action flick, there it is. If you want to see a satire about American consumerism it's only ever so thinly veiled. New Robocop felt like it was going through the motions. I was bored with it the whole way through. Is it really too much to ask for a movie with a robot super cop to be cool? I'd buy that for a dollar.



Image courtesy of robocopmovie-2014.com

Tech[nology]News:

Pokemon enters online arena

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Combine the greatest invention of mankind (the Internet), and one of the most prolific cultural icons of my generation, and you get the most interesting social experiment I've had the opportunity to study and participate in.

The set up is simple, run a Lua script to catch commands from the chatroll of a live streaming service and then use those as the inputs for an emulator. Featuring eight buttons (up, down, left, right, A, B, start, and select) and a reaction time of less than 40 seconds. Pokemon is a great candidate for the web to try and play collectively.

Five hundred thirty-five thousand sixty-two unique people from across the world have massed together to try and play a single game of Pokemon together. Our intrepid hero, Red, from the original Pokemon series is being bombarded with 16 commands per second and there is no end in sight. Constantly bumping into walls, falling off ledges, releasing his best Pokemon, consulting the helix fossil and it's never ending wisdom, Red is the embodiment of greatness.

There have been corollaries drawn to the fact that a thousand monkeys on typewriters will surely write Shakespeare, but instead imagine 75 thousand monkeys simultaneously smashing away at a single keyboard trying to write Shakespeare. Twitch plays has raised questions highlighting religion, politics, and whether or not we actually can accomplish anything.

Comparisons to Congress of course have been made, but there is an interesting connect to democracy beyond a bunch of idiots yelling together. There is a running poll on how the live stream about how to make its decisions.

If 75 percent vote anarchy then the inputs are immediately processed and

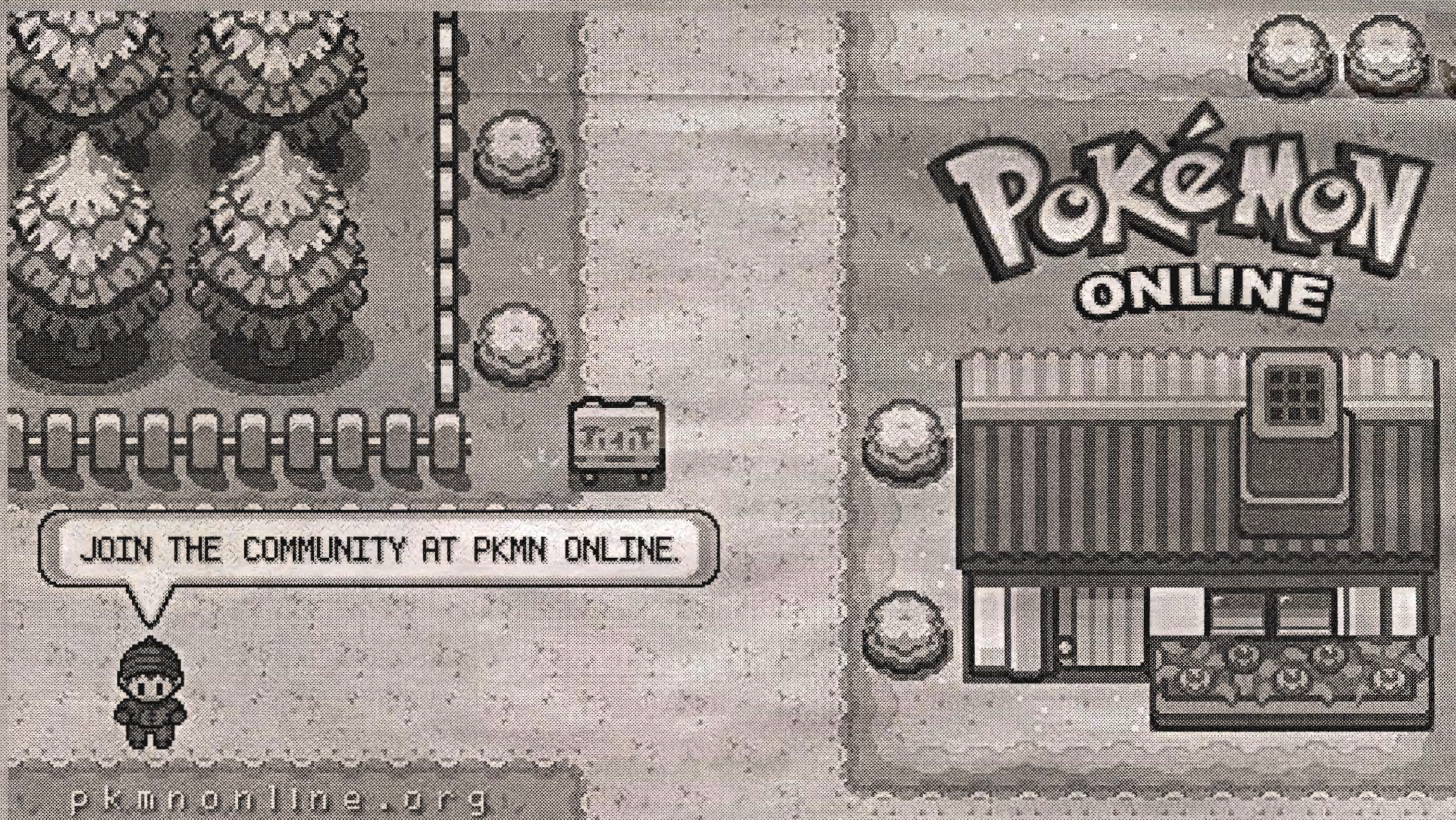


Image courtesy of pkmonline.org

sent to Red, if 75 percent vote democracy then there is a five second delay where the most popular command is chosen. There is a near even divide of anarchists and the democratic.

The battle between their commands grow ever more complex. What started as start spam has grown into complex chains of commands to ensure that negative progress is made until anarchy is restored.

Democracy is somewhat counter to the original setup, but without it takes 12 hours to pass a trivial obstacle.

Red was making significant progress with the help of Bird Jesus and the helix fossil, near half of the game was completed, when a challenger has appeared. Someone had the idea to set up a side by side competitor with an RNG (Random Number Generator) to see who could beat the game faster (if indeed it was

possible) people or the universe. Surely thousands of people who have played the game countless times, and can collectively create pages of statistical sheets, progress charts, and strategy guides could beat a computer.

It's not so clear. After two days RNG beat two gym leaders; RNG was easily keeping pace with the humans. hilariously, RNG then caught a Magikarp and released its only other Pokemon, Charizard. The human payers aren't much better though, we released two of our best Pokemon whilst trying to put a Flareon in our PC. How is it that our collective butts are being kicked by nothing more than numbers created from cosmic interference? Upon restarting, RNG is now playing Pokemon Crystal, and 101 hours later it has already beaten six out of eight gym leaders on its way to becoming Pokemon master. A task we have reached,

but at hour 234.

What does it all mean? Ultimately, one hundred thousand persons logged on collectively trying to win a game together won't solve any world problems. The greatest thing about it is that despite the inherent madness and the freedom be evil we are making progress.

As trivial as beating a game of Pokemon can be, It shows we are capable of collectively working together towards a common goal.

It may take 7.5 million commands before it's clear we can even complete a game that can take as little time as an hour an half to beat, but that doesn't make it any less amazing.

It is possible that dare I say it, we can change the world. I don't know what to make of the fact that an RNG is apparently better at this than us, perhaps the universe is just inherently good at Pokemon.